

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00  
INR-07 NSAE-00 L-03 DHA-02 SCA-01 H-01 SCS-03  
DODE-00 PRS-01 EUR-12 ORM-02 IO-13 SAB-02 AID-05  
/089 W

-----181922Z 063649 /40

R 181440Z MAY 77  
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5350

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PFOR, BL  
SUBJECT: TODMAN'S CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT HUGO BANZER

1. FOLLOWING IS MY RECOLLECTION OF THE CONVERSATION THAT ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN HAD WITH PRESIDENT BANZER ON MAY 16. AMBASSADOR ALBERTO CRESPO WAS ALSO PRESENT. THIS REPORTING TELEGRAM WAS PREPARED AFTER TODMAN'S DEPARTURE FROM LA PAZ.

2. AFTER AN INITIAL EXCHANGE OF PLEASANTRIES AND PICTURE TAKING, PRESIDENT BANZER STATED THAT HE WAS DELIGHTED THAT THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY HAD COME TO BOLIVIA TO LEARN FIRST HAND ABOUT THE NEW SITUATION IN THIS COUNTRY. AMBASSADOR TODMAN INDICATED THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE US AND BOLIVIA WERE EXCELLENT AND THAT HE HOPED THE PROBLEM OF THE US PRISONERS WOULD NOT CONSTITUTE A DIFFICULTY BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. TODMAN INDICATED THAT IT IS THE POLICY OF THE USG TO RESPECT BOLIVIAN LAWS WITH REGARD TO NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING BUT THAT WE WISH TO SEE TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE AN ACCELERATION OF THE JUDICIAL PROCEDURES FULLY WITHIN APPROPRIATE LEGAL CONTEXT. HE DESCRIBED THE ATMOSPHERE IN WASHINGTON WITHIN WHICH THE PARENTS COMMITTEE HAS

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CREATED GREAT EMOTIONAL CONCERN ABOUT US PRISONERS AND HAS STIMULATED SEVERAL CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRIES. PRESIDENT BANZER SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THE CONCERN OF THE PARENTS FOR THEIR CHILDREN AND ALSO UNDERSTOOD THE POSITION OF THE USG. HE SAID THAT THERE HAD BEEN FREQUENT SPECULATION ABOUT GOB AMNESTY FOR AMERICAN PRISONERS BUT THAT THIS WAS NOT POSSIBLE EITHER LEGALLY OR POLITICALLY. HE SAID IT WAS IN THE INTERESTS

OF BOTH COUNTRIES THAT THE CASES BE EXPEDITED AND THAT HE HAS GIVEN APPROPRIATE INSTRUCTIONS TO THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR TO DO ALL THAT HE CAN. TODMAN SHOWED PRESIDENT BANZER A COPY OF THE LETTER FROM SENATORS ON THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE WHICH WAS SENT TO SECRETARY VANCE. PRESIDENT BANZER READ THE LETTER CAREFULLY AND AT ONE POINT LOOKED UP TO SAY THAT THE ACCUSATION THAT I HAD NOT BEEN ACTIVE ON BEHALF OF THE PRISONERS WAS AN OBVIOUS DISTORTION BECAUSE IN ALL OF OUR RECENT CONVERSATIONS I HAD RAISED THE ISSUE OF THE AMERICAN PRISONERS. PRESIDENT BANZER SAID THAT AS FAR AS HE KNEW I WAS THE MOST CONCERNED MEMBER OF THE EMBASSY STAFF. HE NOTED THAT THE GOB IS STUDYING SERIOUSLY THE ELIMINATION OF THE AUTOMATIC REVIEW BY THE SUPREME COURT OF EACH SENTENCE. HE REFERRED TODMAN TO THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR FOR DISCUSSIONS OF SPECIFIC CASES.

3. PRESIDENT BANZER OUTLINED IN CLEAR TERMS HIS ASPIRATIONS FOR BOLIVIA. THE CENTRAL THEME HE STRESSED WAS THE RETURN OF GOVERNMENT TO THE PEOPLE BY 1980 THROUGH A PROCESS NOT YET DECIDED. HE SAID THAT HE HAS COMMISSIONED SEVERAL ADVISERS TO PREPARE PROPOSALS AND THAT THESE ARE BEING REVIEWED AT THIS TIME. HE STRESSED THAT THE MILITARY ARE IN POWER IN BOLIVIA AND IN OTHER COUNTRIES IN SOUTH AMERICA ON A TRANSITORY BASIS TO RECTIFY CHAOTIC CONDITIONS AND PLACE COUNTRIES ON THE PATH OF PROGRESS. TODMAN SAID THAT THE US CONSIDERS ITSELF A DEMOCRATIC REGIME AND ACCORDINGLY DOES PREFER THAT THERE BE POPULAR PARTICIPATION IN OTHER COUNTRIES SO AS TO FACILITATE A FREE AND EFFECTIVE RELATION. HOWEVER, HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE TIMING AND THE MEANS OF RESTORATION OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESS IN BOLIVIA, AS ELSEWHERE, IS A MATTER FOR EACH COUNTRY AND GOVERNMENT TO DETERMINE.

4. PRESIDENT BANZER OUTLINED THE BOLIVIAN EFFORTS TO OBTAIN ACCESS TO THE SEA AND DESCRIBED THE PRESENT STATUS OF DISCUSSIONS AS A STALEMATE. HE NOTED THAT HE HAD CALLED ON BOTH CHILE AND PERU IN HIS SPEECHES OF DECEMBER 24 AND MARCH 23 TO COME FORTH WITH NEW PROPOSALS. NOTHING HAS HAPPENED SINCE HIS SPEECHES. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT BOLIVIA MUST DO SOMETHING BEFORE LONG SO AS TO STIMULATE SOME ACTION MAINLY FROM CHILE WHICH IN A SENSE IS THE PARTY OF THE FIRST PART. PRESIDENT BANZER SHOWED CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE CHILEAN MILITARY IN GIVING UP CHILEAN TERRITORY BUT HE SAID OTHERS MUST UNDERSTAND THE DIFFICULTIES THAT BOLIVIA HAS IN MAKING TERRITORIAL EXCHANGE. PRESIDENT BANZER SAID THAT THERE IS A ROLE FOR THE USE IN THIS MATTER AND SUGGESTED THAT A PUBLIC STATEMENT BE MADE PROVIDING MORAL SUPPORT FOR THE LONG-SOUGHT BOLIVIAN OUTLET TO THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

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R 181440Z MAY 77  
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E.O. 11652: N/A  
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SUBJECT: TODMAN'S CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT HUGO BANZER

5. AMBASSADOR TODMAN INQUIRED ABOUT PRESIDENT BANZER'S  
VIEWS ON CHILEAN/PERUVIAN FRICTION. THE PRESIDENT'S  
REPLY PARALLELED THAT OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER IN THAT  
HE BELIEVES, OR SO HE SAID, THAT CHILE AND PERU WILL  
INEVITABLY GO TO WAR. PRESIDENT BANZER SAID HE SEES NO  
WAY IN WHICH AN ARMED CONFLICT CAN BE AVOIDED IF CHILE AND  
PERU ARE LEFT TO THEIR OWN DEVICES. HE SAID BOTH COUNTRIES  
HAVE EDUCATED THEIR MILITARY TO EITHER SEEK REVENGE OR TO  
PREVENT IT FROM OCCURRING. BOTH COUNTRIES, BUT PARTICULARLY  
PERU, ARE ARMED BEYOND ANY REASONABLE NEED. THE BOLIVIAN  
POLICY IN THE EVENT OF WAR WILL BE TO MAINTAIN TO THE EXTENT  
THAT IT CAN COMPLETE NEUTRALITY. SINCE BOLIVIA CANNOT EXPECT  
TO PREVENT THE USE OF ITS TERRITORY BY EITHER BELLIGERENT  
IT WILL NEED TO HAVE SUPPORT FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD  
TO PRESERVE ITS NEUTRALITY. PRESIDENT BANZER SAID THAT THERE  
IS AN IMPORTANT ROLE FOR THE US TO PLAY IN SEEKING TO PREVENT  
WAR BETWEEN CHILE AND PERU. HE SAID THE US SHOULD QUIETLY AND  
DIPLOMATICALLY WORK IN BOTH LIMA AND SANTIAGO TO CALM TENSIONS  
AND REDUCE POSSIBLE TRENDS TO CONFLICT.

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6. TODMAN VOLUNTEERED INFORMATION ABOUT US POLICY TOWARD CUBA. HE SAID THAT AFTER STATIONING SOME US PERSONNEL IN THE SWISS EMBASSY IN HAVANA AND A LIKE STEP BY THE CUBANS IN THE CZECH EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON, ANY OTHER MOVEMENT TOWARD RESUMPTION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WOULD BE CONTINGENT UPON POSITIVE AND FAVORABLE STEPS BY CUBA. HE SAID THE US HAS CONCERNS ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS IN CUBA AND ITS CONTINUED STATIONING OF ITS MILITARY PERSONNEL OUTSIDE OF ITS BORDERS. TODMAN SAID THAT THE MAIN PURPOSE OF HIS TRIP TO CUBA WAS TO SORT OUT THE OVERLAPPING FISHING CLAIMS OF THE US AND CUBA TO WORK OUT A BASIS FOR FISHING ACTIVITIES BY BOTH COUNTRIES IN THE 90-MILE AREA BETWEEN THEM. HE ALSO SAID THAT HE FELT A SLIGHT MOVEMENT IN IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH CUBA COULD BE USED TO FURTHER OUR OBJECTIVES IN IMPROVING HUMAN RIGHTS IN CUBA AND A CLARIFICATION OF CUBA'S USE OF ITS ARMED FORCES. PRESIDENT BANZER SAID THAT HE FELT THE US POSITION TO BE EMINENTLY SOUND. TODMAN THEN DESCRIBED BRIEFLY US AND PANAMA NEGOTIATIONS FOR A NEW TREATY CONCERNING THE PANAMA CANAL. TODMAN INDICATED THAT ONE OF THE CARDINAL PRINCIPLES OF THE US WAS TO PRESERVE THE ABILITY OF THE US TO PROTECT THE CANAL FOR FREE AND LEGITIMATE USE BY ALL THE COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD. AGAIN PRESIDENT BANZER SIGNALLED HIS CONCURRENCE IN OUR PRACTICAL APPROACH. TODMAN ALSO RAISED US POLICY TOWARD THE GSA TIN STOCKPILE INDICATING THAT ANY SUCH SALES AFTER CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL WOULD BE MADE ONLY AFTER SERIOUS CONSULTATION WITH BOLIVIA, TO THE PRODUCERS AND THE TIN COUNCIL. HE CONGRATULATED PRESIDENT BANZER ON BOLIVIA'S ANNOUNCED DECISION TO RATIFY THE FIFTH TIN AGREEMENT AND SAID THAT IT WOULD BE EASIER TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS RELATED TO TIN WITHIN THE AGREEMENT. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION IS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING A MODIFICATION OF LONG-STANDING POLICY SO THAT THE US MIGHT BE ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE IN SOME WAY TOO STOCKPILES MANAGED BY COMMODITY AGREEMENTS. PRESIDENT BANZER EXPRESSED HIS PLEASURE AT THIS POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND NOTED THAT BOLIVIA AGREED WITH THE CONCEPT OF A US STRATEGIC STOCKPIKE OF TIN BUT WAS DISMAYED WHEN THE STOCKPILE WAS USED FOR PURPOSES OF REDUCING TIN PRICES.

7. PRESIDENT BANZER CONCLUDED THE CONVERSATION BY NOTING THE US/BOLIVIAN RELATIONS ARE EXCELLENT AND THAT FURTHER VISITS BY SENIOR USG OFFICIALS WOULD HELP IN IMPROVING THEIR UNDERSTANDING AND BETTERING EVEN MORE OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS.

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009